

RollPlay



GM NOTEBOOK
ISSUE TWENTYTWO

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Welcomed Crossings, Patrons!

Far Verona has officially begun, though you and I have been playing in the world of Acheron Rho for a long time, now, it seems. With our premiere on May 9th, the prep I've been doing has shifted dramatically from "preshow world building" right into every-week GM prep, with all the accompanying notes, diagrams and the like. Much of this ephemera comes from my live streamed GM prep and behind the scenes, and I hope you'll enjoy reading it here as much as I enjoyed generating it. I managed to do some prep and updating of Court of Swords as well. I've a brand new, fancy scanner on the way so next month we'll try and return to Swan Song and Mirrorshades notes making their way into the zine. Lots to do, until another star!

Thank you so much for your support, and welcome to Issue 22 of the GM's Notebook.

Adam Koebel
RollPlay GM



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3.

FAR VERONA: FACTION TURN RULES AND RULINGS



In the words of its designer, Kevin Crawford, our Far Verona Faction Turn project is pushing the game well beyond its anticipated tolerance. With Kevin's help, your patience and a whole lot of care and attention, we've already navigated a handful of rules questions

and queries regarding the Faction Turn. If you're a GM running your own Faction Turn in a Stars Without Number game, I hope you'll find this selection of clarifications and house rules for Far Verona useful.

■ Assets Moving Themselves:

Only Assets that specifically call out being able to move themselves can do so.

■ Boltholes and Refit Asset action:

If a unit is reduced to 0 hp (due to the protection of a bolthole) it cannot be “traded” for a full-health unit with the Refit action. It must restore at least 1hp before being refitted.

■ Can Assets Be Moved into an Empty Hex:

No. The phasing of movement is “as an action, they may move to any world within X hexes of their current location.” which means they must have a Planet / World to move to.

■ Capital Fleets

A Capital Fleet is a Starship-type Asset, despite being called a Spaceship type Asset in the book. This is a typo, AFAICT.

■ Combining Commodities Brokers & Pretech Logistics:

Activating a Commodities Broker to reduce the cost of the next purchase will reduce the cost of an Asset obtained with Pretech Logistics, provided the orders given are activating the Commodities Broker then activating Pretech Logistics thereafter.

■ Covert Shipping

Covert Shipping has a lack of clarity around whether it requires the Use Asset Ability action to trigger. Since it doesn't have "As an Action..." in its text the way the other Assets do, I'll allow its use for the Fac Cred. This means it can be used during Attack, Expand Influence, etc.

■ Defending Another Faction

When an Attack is declared against a Faction, that Faction can choose to ask another Faction with at least one Asset on the same World to Defend in their stead. If they agree, the Defending Faction is treated as if they had been attacked with regards to tags, stats, etc. If they are unsuccessful the Attack affects the original, intended Faction as usual.

■ Giving FacCreds to Other Factions:

This is possible whenever, and entirely legal. Just have your Representative let me know when you're making the transfer and once I've confirmed with the recipient party, I'll make the change.

■ Lawyers Clarification

The Lawyers Asset has text that reads "Lawyers cannot attack or counterattack Force assets." which is intended to more specifically mean "Lawyers cannot deal hit point damage to Force assets"

■ Locations in the Faction Map:

The text has some confusing elements about what locations are and how we move between them. The hierarchy of size is Sector -> Hex -> Planet. Where the game says "world" it is interchangeable with "Planet". Assets must be attached to a Planet but a Planet is all the moons, orbiting bases, etc that entry contains. You cannot attack a Faction's asset that is on a separate Planet from yours. You must move your Assets from Planet to Planet even if those Planets share a Hex.

■ Locked In to a Seize Planet Action:

When undertaking the Seize Planet Action, Factions are bound by the following "If all the assets cannot be destroyed in one turn, the faction must continue the attempt next turn until either successful or all of their own assets on that planet have been destroyed or have left the planet." As per the rules, this is to lock a Faction into their assault. A rule interaction as written could have potentially locked a Faction into this action "forever". To prevent this lock, instead, on each unsuccessful turn of Seize Planet, a faction must choose to follow up with;

Remain Engaged

Continue the Attack as per the rules, engaging another round of assaults.

Retreat

Pull the troops out. Make opposed Force tests between you and the target for each asset you're pulling out; if they win or tie, you lose the asset. Withdrawn assets are still in the same system, but you're no longer assaulting the world and can do something else on your next turn.

■ Lodestone: A Primer

Lodestone is a World with the additional qualities of an Asset, in that it may be moved 1 hex in any direction when the controlling Faction chooses the Activate Asset Abilities action for their turn. Because this is a weird thing we made up for our game, some slight adjustments have had to be made to the way other things work in relation: for example - if a Transit Web targets Lodestone as a place to move Assets to, and Lodestone moves, the Web will still operate so long as Lodestone is in range. Otherwise, the movement is invalid.

Lodestone is a World, and as such cannot be destroyed or targetted with Attack actions. Aside from its ability to move one hex as described above, it is in all other ways a TL 4 World. If your faction turn relies on something specific about this unusual World, please have your representative contact me.

■ Multiple Commodities Brokers:

You can use the Ability of the Commodities Broker multiple times for a single purchase, if you wish. Half price is still the greatest discount possible, and you have to commit to using all the Brokers on the same purchase so you run the risk of overage if you roll too high.

■ New Faction Tags:

This is a purely fictional part of gameplay - tags will be added or removed by the ongoing fiction and cannot be purchased or otherwise engineered.

■ Pretech Researchers and the Refit Asset Action

Pretech Researchers (and any other Asset that allows purchase above the usual TL of a planet) only apply their special qualities to the Buy Asset action, not the Refit Asset action.

■ Rounding and Faction Goals:

For Military Conquest, Commercial Expansion and Intelligence Coup goals, difficulty is $\frac{1}{2}$ the number of assets destroyed, rounded up.

■ Rounding and Faction Goals:

Purchasing Assets from another Faction is allowed. The Faction in question must have the asset purchased and placed, then exchange ownership with another Faction. The new owner must have the stats required to buy that Asset themselves, and it immediately counts against asset limits, etc. Selling and buying Assets between Factions does not require an Action. Each Faction may only Purchase one Asset in this way per month. This intentionally allows Factions without access to a TL5 planet to obtain TL5 Assets from one who does, provided they are able to support it statistically. Assets purchased from another Faction may act on the immediate following Faction Turn, provided they would otherwise have been able to do so.

■ Shipping Other Factions' Assets:

Abilities to move Assets refer only to Assets owned by the Faction in question. You cannot use your Assets (such as Shipping Combines, etc) to move other Factions' Assets around.

■ Transit Web Clarification:

When a Transit Web is activated, choose 2 Planets and transfer as many Assets on those worlds back-and-forth as desired.

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Court of Swords:

Into the Devil's Vault



Fronts:

The Invasion Force

The Gold Faction Farang who have, by way of their Scout and Kalimat's mistake in the realm of Utrix, penetrated the barrier that separates the World from the Outside Places and gained egress. Drawn like moths to a flame, they come to the City of Brass to consume it for magical power.

- ☒ Build the Golden Ziggurat from which to stage their takeover
- ☒ Establish the Anathema Network to dampen magical defenses
- ☒ Seize the lower district
- ☐ Convert the lower district
- ☐ Seize the rest of the city
- ☐ Convert the City of Brass

The Armada of Salted Earth

An alliance of divine and earthly powers, led by the servants of the Tower, who aim to destroy the city before the Invasion Force can take control of it and consume its power, thus making them harder to defeat down the line.

- ☒ Destroy the A'harisa
- ☒ Wipe out any Arcana who oppose them
- ☒ Disrupt and repurpose the City's feng shui
- ☐ Find the Devil's Vault
- ☐ Break open the Immortals' safehouse
- ☐ Sacrifice the Immortals to Maru Bavati

- ☐ Awaken the Great Mount and Destroy the City forever

The Situation With Tulpa

A member of the Silver Faction Farang, who was long imprisoned here in the World, freed by Berg, but without form. Pseudo-possessor of our favourite half-orc, passenger and manipulator of his behaviour.

- ☐ ???
- ☐ ???
- ☐ ???
- ☐ Tulpa gains access to Heaven and the Fountain

Ramus Is Disintegrating // PHASE ONE

Ramus is a soulless abomination who is free of the wheel but who is slowly being rejected by the World, because he Should Not Be.

- ☒ You lose your alignment. Your body no longer remembers its destiny, your alignment is now blank. Also, small stuff ala the Lawbreaker trait - glass fogs at your touch, food goes bad, animals mistrust and avoid you, etc.
- ☐ Your body begins to become weakened, your attachment to existence flagging - you lose 10HP from your Maximum. Each time you wake from a Long Rest, make a DC10 CON save or take a level of exhaustion
- ☐ The Fountain has become distant, her waters thin. When you cast a spell, make a DC10+ the level of the spell WIS save or

the spell cannot be cast and the slot is lost.

□ Your connection to the Fountain and the World is a distant memory, you move through it like a ghost, people forgetting your name and treating you as though you were not here at all.

Loose Threads

— Ma’ud (the reincarnation of Azure Vortex, a genasi girl from the River Provinces)

— Alive and travelling with her new friend Pravat Half-Elven, who wants his fucking knife back

— Agni and Imix and revenge on the Gnomes

— In the background, they’re being fire gods, sleeping most of the time, doing primordial shit like making the earth hot

— The conspiracy within the Heavenly Bureaucracy (Anne’s guardian angel, the stairway, etc.)

— *x-files theme*

— Inanna and the other Sahir

— Know a fight’s lost when they see one, like magical rats leaving a magical ship, they’re all gone elsewhere or, maybe if it’s interesting a few are helping the Farang because novelty is a thing

— The Black Serpent, etc.

— Primordial darkness, growing in the wings, not actually relevant right now

THE DEVIL’S VAULT

» It resides somewhere in the lower city

» It is a temple to the Devil as well as a vault containing earthly treasure

» It is protected by a clan or tribe of Orcs, some of whom also venerate an entity they call The Destructor, a “bodhisattva” of the Tower and a Saint of Bloodshed and Chaos (it’s Berg)

» It contains the Key of Pearls, a way to open the impenetrable barrier that protects the Immortals in their sanctum

» It contains wealth, riches, secrets and other desires hidden away here

» Tended by the forgotten or the hidden away - mistresses and forbidden lovers, bastard children, apostates and the like, people who are forgotten or someone wants to forget

The Metaphor: “A home for things that cannot be let go.”

Not literally a Vault in the way we think of one, but a portal into a realm of desire, where the Devil’s clergy can hide away the things you love most but cannot speak of. It’s super magical, so it can conjure / teleport / etc items that we might otherwise not have access to. It’s part illusion, part real, all bad idea.

To get the Key of Pearls, the players have to bypass the Advocate, an angelic entity who serves as the caretaker of the Vault, and then conjure forth the key from the vault.

Maybe they do this by tricking it into thinking they're Immortals, maybe they bargain with it, maybe they try to kill the thing, whatever.

What is in the way:

- Literal guardians (Celestial Lions, Priests, Monks, etc.)
- Figurative guardians (the "puzzle" aspect of it, their own desires getting in the way, etc)

What Is Your Hidden Desire? What Can You Never Let Go Of?

RAMUS

- His soul
- His own life
- Riches and wealth
- Berg / his friends

BERG

- Azure Vortex / love / companionship
- My friends / Kali / Ramus
- The Dead, all those lost
- Freedom (literal or metaphorical "from suffering")
- Tulpa

KALIMAT

- Forgiveness
- Fame
- Family, other Dragonborn, etc.

YOJI

- ???

The Red Hand

A clan of Orcs who, upon being freed from their masters in the chaos of the city merged with another tribe, and who follow the disciplines of the Destructor, an orcish mythopoeic figure of destruction and emancipation.

The Destructor is a reincarnating figure, born into each generation, who will supposedly lead Orcs into freedom and out of enslavement. In the past, incarnations of the Destructor have been heroes in times of chaos or war. They believe that Berg is the current incarnation of this entity. The Destructor is known by many signs, among them his red hand, sigil of bloodshed and strength.

(D&D fans will recognize "the Destructor" as a facet / aspect / mask of Ilneval, an Orcish god from D&D lore - I try and do this where I can, keeping the branded stuff present but bending and warping it, like how Utrix was seen as a reincarnation of Zerthimon by the Gith that served him.)

As a result, they seek to test him, to draw out his power and then ultimately to force him to lead them into glory. They demand this, they don't ask. This is his destiny and theirs even if he doesn't realize it and he will be MADE to understand.

Monster

- The Red Hand Leader, Uragh
- The Advocate
- Priests and sundry
- Pravat Half-Elven

An Encounter with Pravat and Ma'ud

Pravat is a simple rogue, born to a human mother and an absent father, he grew up beautiful and clever, but ultimately hated for his strange appearance - he has long graceful ears, the white skin of a living ghost and an odd talent for language. As a result he lives a life on the road, ever seeking meaning.

He was, for a time, a hired killer who, with the aid of his magic knife and the secret dreams of a slumbering serpent, killed many important men and women for money. He came to the city to do the same when he was captured by the Aharisa.

He was freed from their prison by a young girl, who he befriended and in the chaos all he wants is his god damn knife back and to get out of here.

The Slumbering Serpent is guiding him, using Ma'ud and her karmic connection to Berg to track the knife, and at some inopportune moment he appears before Kalimat to demand its return.

5.

FAR VERONA: JUSTICE IN ACHERON RHO

Since the player characters in Far Verona are portraying a sort of Texas-ranger / Dog in the Vineyard style wandering law enforcement gang, I wanted to put some thought into the way justice is seen in Acheron Rho - not just legal justice but who is seen as deserving of the care and attention of the kinds of people that the players are representing. It was a fun exercise, and here, I've reproduced our own hierarchy of who gets what. If you want to learn more about my main inspiration for this, a medieval religious concept called The Great Chain of Being, check it out: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_chain_of_being

This is the way mainstream Acheron Rho society functions. Your mileage may vary by planet, city or culture.

GOD

- ▶ At the top of the chain, above all else is God. Sometimes called Allah, sometimes Yawhew, Buddha, or whatever, the divine power that sits above all humans is worshipped in many ways by many religions, but in Acheron Rho, they all fall under the auspices of the High Church. This is their philosophy and as a result, their divine interpretation sits at the top.

THE EMPEROX

- ▶ All power flows into the world by its divinely appointed overlord, chosen by God from birth, empowered by the Noble Houses and supported thereby. This is both Emperox-as-person and Emperox-as-title though the latter creates the former. What sayeth the Emperox, goes. This is tricky when the Emperox is the Blood Eagle or the betrayer Cygnus.

THE CHURCH

- ▶ The High Church is, as an organization, next in line. They're made up predominantly of nobles, and things get complicated when you've got a contest between a non-noble Priest and a Noble lay worshipper, but generally Priests are afforded a level of legal and social leeway that isn't given to anyone else. Killing, abusing or generally mistreating the clergy is bad form, at the very least.

THE NOBILITY

▶ Divided into three branches, one of which is currently absent, the Houses Noble make up the vast backbone of the Empire. They are many (though outnumbered by all that below them - the whole thing is quite pyramid shaped, really) they are each incredibly valuable and important to the Empire. Within the Nobility the three sub-branches, each more important than those below;

- × **The Imperial House**
- × **The Houses Major**
- × **The Houses Minor**

THE CORPORATES

▶ When you are the lesser scion of a Noble house, doomed to a toothless sort of power, sometimes your ambition gets the better of you and you do a thing like join the Corporates. Sometimes, when you're born a serf or a free-man, your best bet is to find the nearest greasy corporate ladder and climb. You'll die a fundamentally powerless person in the eyes of the church and the houses, and you're unlikely to wed "well" but if you're good at it, you'll die filthy stinking rich. PRISM, the Trilliant Ring, the Deathless and especially ACRE make up this strange outsider class whose money is power, when wielded correctly.

THE CORPORATES

▶ What we have here is a particularly successful serf. Someone who might own a farm or factory, who makes beaucoup credits for their master in the Noble Houses but are themselves politically irrelevant. They're as close to the bourgeoisie as we get in this setting but here they are the top of the bottom. The scum atop the great labour-soup that makes up the serfdom.

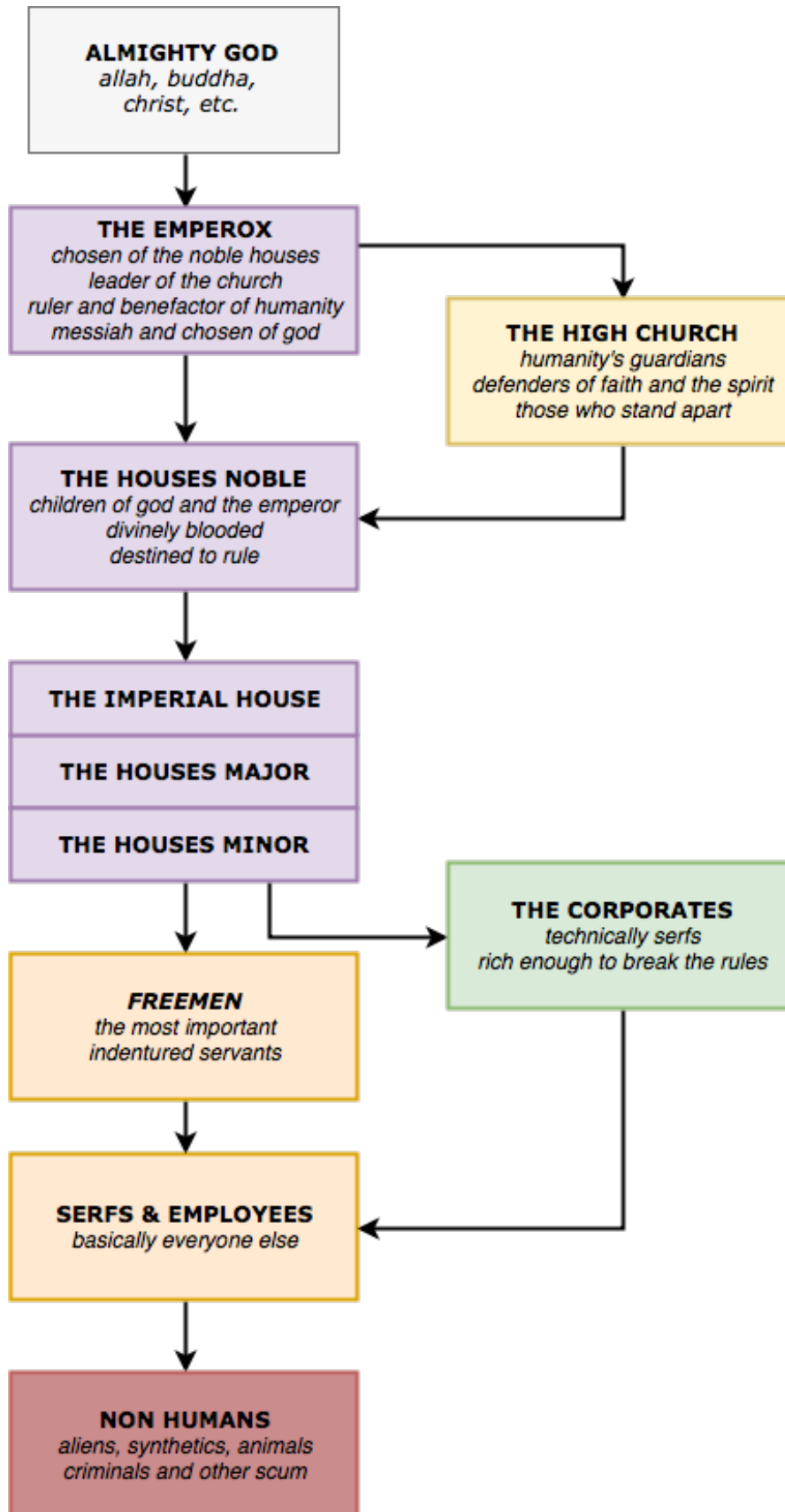
- × **rich farm owners / factory owners / well off yeomen**
- × **members of Planetary Government who aren't Nobility**
- × **landlords and other property custodians**

SERFS AND EMPLOYEES

- ▶ If you are not a noble, you are this. Corporates and Freemen are special, influential types of this lower class, but most people can, with a little effort, point to who owns them. They work the land and factories, they pilot and engineer the ships, they fight, they serve and they die when called on. They are the lumpen proletariat and the great unwashed masses. Everyone has a Noble Lord or Director they serve, when it comes down to it.

NON HUMANS

- ▶ Animals, aliens, illegal synthetics. Anything that is literally not human. Technically the Guild. Also many human criminals and excommunicates. On some worlds, marginalized humans fit into this category but that's technically illegal and immoral. C'est la guerre.



6.

FAR VERONA:

THE CREW OF THE
ONE HUNDRED
AND SIXTY SEVEN
METERS OF PURE
JURISPRUDENCE



7.

FAR VERONA:

GM PREP

EPISODE 01

"What do the PCs do?"

... — ...

OVERARCHING SITUATIONAL GOAL / PREMISE:

“House Crux employs assets to patrol and maintain the rule of law throughout the systems of the Empire, and beyond. You are a part of one of those asset teams, led by the Captain of your ship, your mandate is to bring to justice those who would shirk Imperial Law.”

WHAT DOES THAT LOOK LIKE?

- × Hunting down illegal synthetics and retiring them
 - × Hunting down and bringing to justice escaped / fleeing / extant members of the Former House Cygnus
 - × Bringing to justice tax evaders on behalf of House Eridani
 - × Retrieving stolen Imperial Property (ships, facilities, etc)
 - × Negotiating hostage release
 - × Investigating Kidnapping / Missing Persons
 - × Securing Imperial Assets
 - × Repossession
 - × Protecting diplomats and other Imperial VIP
 - × Rooting out and arresting political agitators
 - × Liaising with local militia / police forces for enforcement and training
 - × Enforcing Non-Human Peace Treaty
 - × Enforcing Serfdom Law (Peasant Uprisings, etc)
 - × Working with PRISM, Trilliant and ACRE Personnel to protect Intellectual Property Law (the other kind of piracy)
 - × Taking on Imperial Bounty or Privateer Contracts
 - × Investigating Maltech Violations
 - × Investigating Corruption throughout the Empire
 - × Securing illicit or rogue psychic assets (via House Serpens)
 - × Prisoner Transport
-

THEMES AND CONCEPTS

- × **Imbalance of Justice**
 - × Nobility vs. Serfs
 - × Freeman vs. Indentured
 - × Synths vs. "Real" Humans
 - × Aliens vs. Humans
 - × **Background Intrigue**
 - × Trust
 - × Loyalty
 - × Duty
 - × Personal vs. External
 - × **Real vs. Unreal**
 - × Law (Letter vs. Spirit)
 - × Given Authority vs. Earned Authority
 - × Privilege and the Wielding Thereof
 - × "Human" vs. "Non Human"
-

ORIGINS OF AUTHORITY AND MISSIONS

Mandate comes from House Crux, who are they themselves Mandated by the Church and Empire as a whole to uphold the Laws of Empire.

Houses of the Empire & the Church -> House Crux -> House Crux Internal Body that Manages the Kind of Asset that the PCs Are -> Ship's Captain -> Her Team by Way of ???

WHICH MEANS:

When the PCs get Missions, they get them from their Captain, the ship is where it is because it was guided there by the Internal Body.

The Captain says "what" and "where" and occasionally "who" but never "how"

The PCs decide HOW

Ultimately, the "why" is outside our scope, right? And it's what creates the tension of the game. Is the "why?" morally acceptable to the PCs? Is there a why?

EPISODE ONE

- × Express a theme from the Themes and Concepts section by way of one of the Situations we put the PCs in

THE MISSION

Straightforward Goal + Complications

"Reports have placed an Illegal Synthetic (Synth Registry Number 665A-22X) on Mumeri, a Moon of Echo. We do not know why they are there, or what false identities they operate under, but we have surveillance footage placing them at a market in Cornucopia within the last week. Find 665A-22X and retire it."

// WHY?

BECAUSE THE LAW, FUCKERS

// WHO?

 **Illegal Synthetic 665A-22X aka Dex or Dexter or Dexter Chau**

The Crime

Originally designed to operate farm equipment. Came to Mumeri to attempt to blend in as a human, currently working on a mycoprotein farm as a harvester engineer.

 **Santiago Ortov**

Someone Who Knows They're a Synth and Wants to Snitch

A coworker who thinks that they can get up in the world by being a fucking rat, someone who has bought in to the propaganda and wants the reward they deserve for rooting out the bad guy. Envy, jealousy, a sense of right and wrong. Personal gain at stake.

Nkoyo Quesada

Someone Who Knows They're a Synth and Wants to Protect

The foreman of the mycoprotein farm, who just knows Dex as a good person and a hard worker who did something nice for them, who also knows that they're a synth but doesn't care because they're kind and honestly just make the farm work better. Personal feelings, misgivings about what makes someone a human, also personal reasons money / status / etc.

Saito Sarika

Someone Who Is Sure They're Human

A person who doesn't work on the farm but maybe cohabitates with 665A-22X and is in love with it like a person. Doesn't know it's a synth, thinks it's just a nice guy who loves them. A low-level ACRE facility manager. Someone who participates in distro - might be an escape vector for the Synth.

Viscount Eridanus Theodorou Douglas

The Noble Who Owns the Farm in Question

House Eridanus, very low-tier, owns several businesses in this quadrant of the planet, including the mycoprotein farm in question. A Viscount, someone semi-effective, not bumbling but narrow focus. Smart, but not street smart. Willing to help, able to help, cooperative, etc. Respectful.

Freiherr (Baron) Crux Song Marcus

A Noble Who "Knows" that the Abovementioned Noble Knowingly Employs Synths

House Crux, owns more stuff on Mumeri than the Eridanus noble and wants to absorb their farms into their own biz. They have noticed the yield increase and want to get rid of the other noble as fast as possible so as to get their stuff and make bank. They're just like the Eridanus noble in that they just want to help and are doing "what's right" and also have an advantage in that they know the PCs are coming.

// WHERE?

Mumeri, a Moon of Echo (0202)


A “Harvest Moon” with a ton of farms and infrastructure for feeding the population of Echo - technically Imperially Owned, run using ACRE assets (farm gear, employees, etc) and part of a trade deal with PRISM, to feed their world.

A slightly-harsh earth-like environment, breathable atmo, decent humidity, etc.

A pre-scream Terraforming project that was 95% completed

Fully propagandized by PRISM activity - it’s close to home, people are Brand Loyal and bought in to whatever PRISM tells them

LOCATIONS

-  × The Market Where the Illegal Synthetic Was Last Spotted
 - × The Home that the Asset and its Girlfriend Share
 - × The Mycoprotein Farm
 - × The Workers’ Barracks
 - × The Estate of the Viscount
 - × The Estate of the Freiherr
 - × The Distro Center
 - × The Streets and Miscellany of Cornucopia
 - × A PRISM Media Hub
 - × An ACRE Factory
-

S.


FAR VERONA:

GM PREP

EPISODE 02

*EPISODE TWO aka "The One Where
They Fight the Synth"*




- 
- × Shot from outside the habitation block
 - × Fungal snow
 - × Inside the hallway, someone trudges inside, gas mask hanging from their shoulder, big rubber cloak over their shoulders
 - × They come into a an apartment where we can hear music playing in another room
 - × They drop a bag of tools on the floor, in comes Sarika, we see Dex, he smiles
 - × She says hi, he grunts, she asks long day
 - × He says “they all are” she hugs him says “only six more months, right”
 - × He looks at her, smiles “damn right”

ACT ONE



COMBAT STUFF

- 
- × Remind Booker and Jaycen to roll twice on Initiative
 - × If the Synth wins initiative, remind everyone about Snap Attacks
 - × The Officer that is near Sarika has a lazarus patch, you know, just in case

“Dex” will attack anyone near him, then make a run for it, but he’s concerned about Sarika and if she’s threatened he’ll fight to protect, save or avenge her.

The Crux Officers will attack the Synth, but they’re surprised and skip the first round. Then they’ll follow orders if they’re given or else shoot to kill on the Synth.

If Sarika makes an aggressive move then one of the soldiers kills her. She’ll do this if she thinks “Dex” is about to be killed or if he takes a hit.

The Officers downstairs are still damn far away, they’ll take a long time to get to the fight.

If “Dex” gets away (two rounds of running without being shot, etc.) he makes it to a stairwell and 50/50 he goes up to the roof or down to the lobby.



NOTES ON “DEX”

- × He knows he’s an illegal synthetic
 - × He knows that Sarika doesn’t know he’s a synth
 - × He won’t admit to it while she’s around, he’d rather die than let on
 - × Sarika denies vehemently that he’s a synth, even if he admits it somehow
-

FALLOUT

- × If “Dex” is killed in the fight
 - × Sarika believes it is injustice and hates the Crux but doesn’t fight back, she just denies everything and basically just loses her shit
 - × The PCs probably think they’re done
 - × If “Dex” escapes somehow
 - × Sarika gets apprehended?
 - × She denies everything, but thinks secretly that “Dex” would never leave her
 - × He does, trying to get offworld as soon as possible (for her own good, he has to leave her behind)
 - × If the PCs convince him to surrender
 - × They can execute or interrogate him as they like, I guess (they’re in control)
 - × If Dex somehow kills everyone?
 - × I dunno GG
-

AFTERMATH

- × There’s not just the Synth to deal with, if the PCs are successful in capturing or retiring “Dex” then they still have to deal with Sarika and the Eridanus Viscount
- × It’s illegal to harbour a synthetic, whether you realize you’re doing it or not, Sarika, by having “Dex” in her apartment living with her has broken the law (punishment for this is typically indentured servitude to the Empire, so she’d become property of the local ruling noble which is technically the Eridanus Viscount)
- × The Eridanus Viscount is employing a synth in his factory, which means he failed to secure an Imperial Asset against synthetic infiltration which is a crime punishable by significant fees, potential loss of title, etc.
- × If the PCs confront him, he claims (truthfully) not to have known, blames PRISM and Baron Crux Song for framing him / interfering
- × He attempts to bribe the PCs with credits, then throws himself at their mercy if that doesn’t work, and if they still want to press the issue he threatens them

“you don’t know who you’re messing with”

- × The Baron Song contacts the PCs and offers to “help” resolve anything that needs resolving (basically he wants the Viscount’s stuff)

REWARD XP

- × 2xp for retiring the filthy roboman
 - × 1xp if they punish the other criminals (the Viscount and Sarika)
-

ACT TWO



“The Debriefing”

GOALS

- × Illustrate a return to normalcy
- × Reinforce good behaviour
- × Mitigate, with social and authoritative pressure, bad behaviour
- × Introduce some crew relationships
- × Show off ship life
- × Get the players to write their own goals

When the PCs return, they’re called into the office of the **Richter Crux Isakii Ari** for a debriefing.

The Richter asks for a rundown of what happened from Booker, then has some follow up questions for the group.

The purpose here is to reinforce good behaviour

- × Killing the synth
- × Punishing lawbreakers
- × Reporting on suspicious noble and corporate behaviour (snitchin’)
- × Acknowledge sacrifice (if anyone died, make a HUGE deal of it - even the NPCs, funeral, scene in the mess hall with sad officers, etc.)

Mitigate Bad Behaviour

- × Call out indecision
 - × Reprimand inaction, mercy or uncertainty
 - × Review the decision-making process
-

INDIVIDUAL FOLLOWUP

- × Nomi is asked to stay behind and report to the Richter on the thoughts, feelings and actions of the other party members
 - × Make her seem special and important in a way the others aren't, set her aside, make the party suspicious and distrustful of her
-

OTHER SCENES

- × What does Booker do when he's not busting heads?
 - × A scene with Jaycen and his RIVAL in the GYM ala beach volleyball TOP GUN etc.
 - × Riley has to report to her ACRE representative VI who tells her she only has 123 more years left on her contract and would she like to mortgage her contract for a cool new car?
-

QUESTIONS TO ANSWER

- × Nomi, someone on the ship has a crush on you but is too scared to say anything or really talk to you at all - who are they?
 - × Jaycen, tell me about your crew - your buds and pals on the ship, how well do you know them, who supports you when you need it, who in your group is the outsider?
 - × Booker - why aren't you married? What's your problem? Drinking? Gambling? You a big jerk? Why? Tell me about your social life on the ship.
 - × Riley - talk to me about Engineering. You're technically an indentured servant but you've got skill, experience and command presence - how do the nobles react to this? Who is envious of you? Who treats you like an equal?
-

9.

FAR VERONA:

GM PREP

EPISODE 03

EPISODE THREE



LOOSE ENDS FROM 1/2

Debriefing scene first

- × Present: the Richter and the PCs
 - × The Richter wants to understand the PCs action, get a clear understanding of the players involved and the outcomes
 - × For us, it's a quick recap of the first two episodes
 - × Ask for an IC review from Booker
 - × Allowance for Nomi to talk, but she's getting a separate debriefing from the Richter
 - × Jaycen is allowed to speak, but is mostly ignored
 - × If Riley speaks up, Booker gets the brunt of the discomfort
 - × Let the PCs bring up Yancy, because honestly the Richter doesn't give a af
 - × If nobody mentions it, he gets off scot free
 - × You have some time before we connect to Hiera and get our orders, at ease
 - × Nomi, stick around
-

NOMI & THE RICHTER

- × Polite, a bit disconnected, show a different side of the Richter
 - × Offer a drink, be friendly
 - × Create a vibe where she is special, better, more important than everyone else
 - × Get her to narc on them, especially Booker
 - × "I understand the ACRE asset you've been assigned was acting out of order, what do you think we ought to do about that?"
-

RILEY AND HER HANDLER

- × A "friendly conversation" between the Subdirector and L. Riley
 - × The Subdirector offers a chance to refinance Riley's contract
 - × The whole thing should feel like that weird pressure vibe where they act like they're your friend but really they don't have your best interest in mind
 - × Purpose: establish Riley's situation, ask some interesting questions, show ACRE's presence on the ship
-

CALL FOR PLAYER SCENES

(hopefully a player or two has some socially oriented Goals they can go after, here)

NEW MISSION

Investigate a Missing Persons Report

A noble is dead as the result of an assassination by another noble house, but the nobles have made an effort to make it look like a botched Vagrant kidnapping.

THE PLAYERS

The Murdered Party

Seeker Pyxis Ericksson Mohammad

The Client

Ameerah Vela Pajari Mirabelle

The Bride

Ameerah Vela Pajari Dorotea

The Assassin

Rakshasa Reticulum Voronin Sukhon

The Patsy

Vagrant Captain, Abd al-Kadr Strand

Captain of the Better Part of Valor

The Nosey Journalist

Investigator Aesop Hines

WHAT HAPPENED?

The Bride and the Groom were to be wed, it was a marriage that mother Mirabelle didn't approve of, but Dorotea wouldn't change her mind. Love is a bastard. So Mirabelle hired Sukhon to kill Mohammad. Here's how they did it;

The Assassin infiltrated the crew of Strand's ship. The Assassin provided Captain Strand with information about the schedule and location of the Seeker, allowing

Strand to kidnap him. Then the Assassin murdered him in the brig and fled.

Captain Strand has a dead noble, no ransom and is terrified for his life.

Mommy dearest blames the pirates, and gives the PCs a clear path to “justice” by giving them the Captain’s name and ship, claiming that he contacted her for ransom.

WHERE IS CAPTAIN STRAND?

Captain Strand is, well, stranded on Hong Lu - the Reticulum assassin disabled his spike drive, and he and his crew are stuck on this planet. He’s trying to hide out until he can get his drive repaired and he can bail for Teuthem and get hooked back up with the fleet.

He doesn’t have any money, so he’s looking for handouts / help / etc from a local charitable organization...

Aesop Hines is on-world investigating regime changes on Hong Lu when he hears about the story - a local triad leader mentions a down-on-his-luck captain said they kidnapped a noble and it went bad.

WHAT’S THE BRIEF

Booker gets a communique from the Judiciary

- × A Velan Matriarch is reporting the kidnapping of her Daughter’s fiance by terrorists
 - × She believes that they are hiding out on Hong Lu, a lawless world that recently threw off Imperial Control - her House intelligence says the communication came from there
 - × This is a SNEAKING MISSION
 - × The Prudence will orbit Masursky, a gas giant, you’ll have to fly in shuttle-wise
-

HONG LU BRIEFING

- x A planet under revolt (formerly a House Cygnus Domain)
- x Dissident planet
- x Hot climate, extremely dense population
- x NOT FRIENDLY
- x Potential terrorist, synthetic or other threats
- x High danger level

WHEN THEY GET THERE

- x Remind them of the *Contact skill* (potential contacts - former Imperial agents gone rogue, media contacts, ACRE operatives, etc)
- x Hide the shuttle? Pay someone off? You don't want it stolen, right?

